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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
21 February 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)
SUBJECT: Offshore Island Situation

General

The Chinese Nationalist defense ministry now claims that some 16 Communist patrol vessels, landing craft, and motorized junks were sunk by Nationalist ships and planes near Taishan Island, 40 miles south of Nanchishan, on 18 February. Damage to several other Communist vessels is also alleged. Press accounts from Taipei say the Nationalists have successfully continued their strikes on Communist-held Taishan for each of the past three days.

American military attachés in Taipei believe the Nationalist claims are exaggerated and "too optimistic." A defense ministry assertion that a Communist submarine was sunk is believed untrue.

Early reports from the defense ministry on 18 February indicated that Communist planes had bombed Tungyin Island, held by a small number of Nationalist personnel 40 miles south of Taishan. The ministry now admits that the bombing was carried out by Nationalist planes which had mistaken the target.

A Peiping broadcast heard in Tokyo 20 February claimed that the Soviet Union and Communist China could win an atomic war with the United States. The broadcast boasted that the Communist countries could deliver "several times more" atomic bombs than could the United States. Statements attributed to a Chinese physicist asserted that the Communist powers have a dependable defense against atomic attack but concluded that atomic weapons must be prohibited.

Nanchishan

On 19 February two Chinese Communist swimmers landed on a small island off Nanchishan, [redacted] The swimmers escaped when discovered by Nationalist sentries. This is the first report of Chinese Communist reconnaissance of Nanchishan; it is expected that such efforts will continue.

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DIA, PACOM review(s)
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Matsus

25X1 [redacted] the Nationalists plan to reinforce the Matsu garrison with one infantry regiment within the next two weeks.

Quemoys

Negative.

HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON
Assistant Director,
Current Intelligence

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